

Argument Against Proposition 76

PROPOSITION 76 WILL CUT FUNDING FOR SCHOOLS, HEALTH CARE, POLICE, AND FIRE. It undermines our democratic system of checks and balances by giving the governor awesome new powers without any oversight. And it opens the door to higher taxes.

PROPOSITION 76 OVERTURNS THE MINIMUM SCHOOL FUNDING PROTECTIONS APPROVED BY CALIFORNIA VOTERS WHEN THEY PASSED PROPOSITION 98. Proposition 76 allows the Governor to permanently reduce school funding without a vote of the people.

Our students and schools lost three billion dollars when Governor Schwarzenegger broke his promise to repay the money he took from education. Proposition 76 “terminates the repayment requirement,” meaning the Governor will never have to return this money to our schools’ minimum guarantee.

Proposition 76 will permanently reduce the money schools will get by over \$4 billion—\$600 per student. That means teacher layoffs, larger classes, fewer textbooks, less classroom materials, poorly paid teachers, and overcrowded schools. Proposition 76 keeps California behind states like West Virginia and Kentucky in per pupil education funding.

PROPOSITION 76 DEPRIVES CITIES AND COUNTIES OF HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN STATE FUNDING NEEDED FOR POLICE, FIRE, AND HEALTH CARE. Incredibly, if a “fiscal emergency” is declared, this initiative requires funding be cut for vital services like education, health care, fire, and police, but actually prevents cutting “pork barrel” road projects.

PROPOSITION 76 ATTACKS CALIFORNIA’S SYSTEM OF CHECKS AND BALANCES BY PLACING TOO MUCH POWER IN THE HANDS OF ONE PERSON—THE GOVERNOR. Even if you trust this Governor, who knows what future Governors might do with this unlimited new power.

Under Proposition 76, any Governor could declare a “fiscal emergency” simply by having his own staff overestimate state revenues. Once a fiscal emergency is declared, the Governor would be free to cut vital programs without voter approval and without oversight.

Under Proposition 76, “The Governor could exercise any whim or impose any political vendetta,” warns the *Los Angeles Times*, which calls Proposition 76 “a really bad idea.”

THIS INITIATIVE ALSO GIVES STATE LEGISLATORS NEW POWER TO MAKE MISCHIEF. Just 14 of 120 legislators could block passage of the budget indefinitely, putting government spending on autopilot. This could allow the Governor to declare a “fiscal emergency,” giving the Governor sweeping new powers to make state spending and budget decisions “at his discretion,” with absolutely no oversight or accountability.

CLAIMS THAT PROPOSITION 76 PREVENTS NEW TAXES ARE ABSOLUTELY UNTRUE. This initiative does nothing to prevent higher taxes. If it passes, the Governor and Legislature can raise car taxes, income taxes, or sales taxes without voter approval. Even the President of the California Republican Assembly says that Proposition 76 “actually encourages tax increases.”

CALIFORNIANS CAN’T AFFORD PROPOSITION 76. It will cut education, health care, fire, and police. It attacks our system of checks and balances. And it opens the door to higher taxes. Vote NO.

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Rebuttal to Argument Against Proposition 76

Opponents of Prop. 76—The Live Within Our Means Act—have a solution to California’s budget crisis:

Spend wildly, incur huge debt, and raise taxes to cover the deficits!

That’s how California ended up \$22 billion in debt. California doesn’t have a revenue problem—it has a spending problem. We need Prop. 76 to fix our broken budget system.

Don’t be misled by outrageous claims that Prop. 76 will gut education spending or harm police and fire protection.

Education funding increased by a record \$3 billion this year and now accounts for more than 50% of our general fund spending! Prop. 76 upholds existing state law that mandates education is the state’s #1 funding priority.

Prop. 76 will protect dedicated funds for highway and road construction.

“Prop. 76 will permanently protect law enforcement special funds so politicians cannot cut police and emergency services.”

David W. Paulson, Solano County District Attorney

Proposition 76 is real reform to ensure our state lives by the basic rule California families live by: Don’t spend more money than you bring in:

- *Controls state budget growth* by limiting annual state spending increases to average growth in revenue for the past 3 fiscal years.
- *Stops autopilot spending* that threatens our economic health.
- *Establishes “checks and balances”* for budget decisions. If the Legislature doesn’t cut wasteful spending when revenues drop, the Governor can—a similar provision to what previous California governors had for decades. “YES on 76”—Balance the Budget Responsibly.
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